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ABSTRACT

In 1993-94, Sinclair Community College (SCC), in Ohio, conducted a survey of 1,650 associate degree and certificate candidates to determine their perceptions regarding their educational experiences at SCC. A total of 505 candidates completed the survey, for a response rate of 30.6%. Using a 5-point scale, with 1 indicating "excellent" and 5 indicating "poor," students were asked to rate courses in their major with respect to the quality of instruction, testing and grading, faculty attitudes, course content, instructional materials, class size, course variety, and course availability. Analysis of the findings indicated that, consistent with previous surveys, the quality of instruction was the most highly rated area, receiving a mean score of 1.58. Conversely, the availability of courses was the lowest rated category, receiving a mean rating of 2.22. Further analysis showed significant differences between divisional responses, with least positive ratings coming from engineering technologies and performing arts graduates. Respondents were also asked to rate selected student or institutional services if they had used the service at least once during the last two years. The majority of students indicated that services were excellent or good, while a slight decline in mean ratings from previous years was noted for adult reentry, tutoring, and grounds maintenance. Finally, financial aid and parking received the lowest mean ratings at 2.84 and 2.72, respectively. The survey instrument is appended. (KP)

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ED 375 900

1993-94
POINT OF GRADUATION SURVEY: REPORT OF FINDINGS

Sinclair Community College

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1993-94 POINT OF GRADUATION SURVEY: REPORT OF FINDINGS

Purpose of Study:

Learning about students' perceptions of their educational experiences continues to be an important source of information for decision-making at Sinclair. Feedback from graduate applicants has been particularly important because they have usually spent sufficient time at the College to give a more complete evaluation of the institution than other groups of students.

Until a few years ago Sinclair graduates were not surveyed until a year or more after graduation. At that time, students were asked their perception regarding the quality of their educational experience as well as to provide feedback on outcome measures. While desirable to wait a year post-graduation to assess student outcome measures, there was concern that a year after graduation, graduates' perceptions of some aspects of their Sinclair experience (e.g., services) might be too vague to provide a reliable indicator of performance. Finally, it was thought that the point-of-graduation information could help differentiate between recent and long-term perceptions of the Sinclair experience. Data based on recent experience may be more beneficial with respect to improving services while data based on longer-term perceptions may be more relevant with respect to curriculum improvement.

Consequently, in 1992 the College began collecting student perception information on services and the educational experience at the time of application for graduation. This report documents the current year's survey findings and draws comparisons with the 1992 and 1993 study where applicable.

Response Rate:

IPR, with the assistance and cooperation of the Registrar's Office, conducted the current Point-of-Graduation Survey of Sinclair's Summer 1993 through Spring 1994 associate degree and certificate candidates. The questionnaire was included as part of the packet of materials these students were to complete in order to apply for graduation. The total number of graduation applicants through this time period was 1,650. There were 505 completed surveys for a response rate of 30.6%. Although the response rate is unusually low for this survey (last year's response rate was 60%, 1992's response rate was 72.1%), the representation by Division is generally comparable to the actual distribution of graduates within each Division.

Division	N	Actual Survey Respondents	Graduate Population
Allied Health	166	32.9%	30.3%
Business Technologies	135	26.7%	29.7%
Engineering Technologies	46	9.1%	10.5%
Extended Learning/ Human Services	64	12.7%	13.9%
Liberal Arts & Sciences	50	8.7%	8.4%
Fine & Performing Arts	44	9.9%	7.2%

Analysis: Course-related Ratings

Respondents were asked to rate the courses they had taken in their major on several criteria of instructional programming. Using a scale of 1=excellent to 5=poor, ratings were generally favorable (with the majority of respondents rating each criteria as excellent or good). When converted to means, the rating on the **'quality of instruction' continues to be the most highly rated while 'course availability' continues to be the least highly rated.** Table 1 demonstrates the mean responses for course-related questions over time. Course availability and quality of instruction means have varied little over time. All other facets show improvement in the mean rating this year (the lower the mean, the better the rating), with the 'instructional material' rating improving the most over the previous two years.

Table 1

	1993-94			1992-93			1991-92		
	N	% of Total	Mean	N	% of Total	Mean	N	% of Total	Mean
Quality of Instruction	505	100.0%	1.58	872	100.0%	1.59	620	100.0%	1.59
Testing/Grading	505	100.0%	1.80	872	100.0%	1.86	620	100.0%	1.86
Faculty Attitudes	505	100.0%	1.69	872	100.0%	1.74	620	100.0%	1.71
Course Content	505	100.0%	1.69	872	100.0%	1.75	620	100.0%	1.77
Instructional Material	505	100.0%	1.78	872	100.0%	1.87	620	100.0%	1.87
Class Size	505	100.0%	1.60	872	100.0%	1.65	620	100.0%	1.68
Course Variety	505	100.0%	1.80	872	100.0%	1.85	620	100.0%	1.89
Course Availability	505	100.0%	2.22	872	100.0%	2.21	620	100.0%	2.20

Further analysis of this information shows that there are statistically significant differences between divisional responses (see Table 2). Least positive ratings overall come from Engineering Technologies and Fine & Performing Arts graduates. Allied Health graduates were most pleased with the quality of instruction and least satisfied with the attitude of the faculty. Business Technologies graduates also were most pleased with the quality of instruction, but had considerably less favorable response to the availability of courses. Engineering rated faculty attitudes better than the other criteria, and course availability the least. ELHS overall had the highest ratings for the questions on courses within the major, giving best marks to the quality of instruction and least favorable marks to the course availability. Faculty attitudes got the best rating from Fine and Performing Art graduates, and lowest ratings for course availability. Class size was most positively cited by Liberal Arts graduates, and again, these graduates were least likely to have a positive feeling about course availability.

Table 2

Mean Ratings on Courses in Major - by Division
(1 = excellent through 5 = poor)

	ALH	BUS	ENGR	ELHS	FPA	LAS	TOTAL
Quality of Instruction	1.488	1.607	1.848	1.344	1.776	1.636	1.575
Testing/Grading	1.771	1.785	1.891	1.672	1.960	1.907	1.804
Faculty Attitudes	1.831	1.652	1.652	1.375	1.620	1.818	1.687
Course Content	1.578	1.770	1.913	1.381	1.900	1.886	1.694
Instructional Material	1.620	1.874	1.978	1.563	2.000	1.907	1.776
Class Size	1.506	1.644	1.739	1.438	2.061	1.432	1.603
Course Variety	1.627	1.852	2.087	1.766	2.000	1.841	1.802
Course Availability	1.801	2.370	2.891	2.302	2.580	2.136	2.222
Overall Means by Division	1.653	1.819	2.000	1.577	2.005	1.827	1.769

Using a one-way analysis of variance, significant differences between divisional means at the $p < .01$ level occur for all of the above *except testing/grading*, where differences between divisional means were not statistically significant.

Lastly, mean responses of students by degree-type indicated that AS/AA recipients were significantly more likely to rate 'course content' lower than AAS/ATS recipients while AAS/ATS graduates were significantly more likely to voice dissatisfaction about 'course availability' than AS/AA graduates. Details can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

Mean Ratings on Courses in Major - by Degree
(1 = excellent through 5 = poor)

	(n = 103) AA/AS	(n = 402) AAS/ ATS	(n = 505) TOTAL	SIG. p<.05
Quality of Instruction	1.612	1.566	1.575	
Testing/Grading	1.853	1.791	1.804	
Faculty Attitudes	1.651	1.697	1.687	
Course Content	1.825	1.661	1.694	.0321
Instructional Material	1.892	1.746	1.776	
Class Size	1.490	1.638	1.603	
Course Variety	1.864	1.786	1.802	
Course Availability	2.029	2.272	2.222	.0408

When asked to evaluate courses outside their majors, nearly 89% of the respondents rated these courses as similar to those in their major. This is similar to findings in previous years.

Analysis: Service-related Ratings

Respondents were also asked to rate their perception of select student or institutional services if they had used the service at least once during the last two years. Again, the scale used was 1 = excellent to 5 = poor. The majority of respondents indicated the services they used were excellent or good. Additionally, mean scores have generally improved over the last three years, with only the Testing Center rating remaining flat. A slight decline in mean ratings is noted in Adult Reentry, Tutoring and Grounds Maintenance (see Table 4 for details). Overall, service ratings tend to lag behind instructional ratings.

Table 4

	1993-94			1992-93			1991-92		
	N	% of Total	Mean	N	% of Total	Mean	N	% of Total	Mean
Academic Advising	380	75.2%	2.06	708	81.2%	2.23	563	90.8%	2.25
Admissions	360	71.3%	2.04	747	85.7%	2.24	563	90.8%	2.20
Adult Reentry	94	18.6%	2.19	66	7.6%	2.11	--	0.0%	--
Bookstore	485	96.0%	2.35	851	97.6%	2.52	608	98.1%	2.74
Cafeteria/Vending	447	88.5%	2.33	359	41.2%	2.37	--	0.0%	--
Career Plan. & Placement	157	31.1%	2.22	293	33.6%	2.45	227	36.6%	2.38
Disabilities Services	63	12.5%	1.89	78	8.9%	1.96	79	12.7%	2.35
Financial Aid	250	49.5%	2.84	404	46.3%	2.93	277	44.7%	2.82
Learning Resource Center	459	90.9%	1.94	816	93.6%	2.05	585	94.4%	2.00
Parking	469	92.9%	2.72	828	95.0%	2.93	586	94.5%	2.87
Mail-in Registration	351	69.5%	1.85	658	75.5%	1.91	495	79.8%	1.80
In-Person Registration	403	79.8%	2.18	697	79.9%	2.31	482	77.7%	2.19
Bursar	401	79.4%	2.06	682	78.2%	2.20	477	76.9%	2.10
Student Activities	127	25.1%	2.29	278	31.9%	2.41	196	31.6%	2.54
Counseling & Stu. Dev.	118	23.4%	2.29	249	28.6%	2.36	186	30.0%	2.37
Testing Center	262	51.9%	2.12	217	24.9%	2.12	--	0.0%	--
Tutoring	130	25.7%	2.34	227	26.0%	2.12	161	26.0%	2.45
Grounds Maintenance	245	48.5%	1.90	330	37.8%	1.83	--	0.0%	--
Total respondents	505	100.0%		872	100.0%		620	100.0%	

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Overall, Financial Aid and Parking continue to be the services with the lowest mean ratings. The most positive ratings go to Mail-in Registration and Disability Services (see Table 5). The reader should note, however, that the number of students who used Disability Services is relatively small.

Significant differences by Division exist for mean ratings within Academic Advising, Admissions and the Learning Resource Center (analysis of variance, $p < .01$ level). Allied Health graduates rated Academic Advising significantly lower than the other Divisional graduates. Concurrently, both Allied Health and Fine & Performing Arts graduates were significantly more dissatisfied with Admissions and the Learning Resource Center than other divisional groups.

Table 5

Mean Ratings on Services - by Division
(1 = excellent through 5 = poor)

	ALH	BUS	ELHS	ENGR	FPA	LA	TOTAL
Academic Advising	2.484	1.983	1.714	1.949	1.750	2.205	2.063
Admissions	2.296	1.958	1.841	1.944	2.135	1.636	2.039
Adult Reentry	2.371	2.250	2.091	2.000	2.200	1.429	2.191
Bookstore	2.319	2.369	2.150	2.302	2.612	2.419	2.349
Cafeteria/Vending	2.497	2.231	2.160	2.263	2.277	2.316	2.331
Career Planning & Placement	2.223	2.333	2.229	2.188	1.875	2.437	2.000
Disability Services	1.857	2.188	2.091	1.333	2.000	1.143	1.889
Financial Aid	2.863	2.776	2.536	2.222	3.240	3.308	2.844
Learning Resource Center	2.143	1.758	1.944	1.683	2.255	1.641	1.943
Parking	2.658	2.714	2.895	2.556	2.979	2.615	2.721
Mail-In Registration	1.875	1.883	1.791	1.706	1.926	1.788	1.846
In-Person Registration	2.294	2.081	1.980	1.861	2.578	2.177	2.179
Bursar	2.153	2.018	1.936	1.788	2.231	2.059	2.060
Student Activities	2.250	2.306	2.000	2.111	2.556	2.563	2.291
Counseling & Student Development	2.528	2.150	2.167	2.250	2.500	2.000	2.288
Testing Center	2.330	1.905	2.000	1.944	2.067	2.261	2.118
Tutoring	2.222	2.656	2.417	2.600	2.778	1.773	2.339
Grounds Maintenance	1.885	1.812	2.087	1.720	2.160	1.960	1.902
Overall Mean by Division	2.316	2.328	2.037	2.111	2.444	1.870	2.246

Using one-way analysis of variance, significant differences in divisional means occur (at the $p < .01$ level) for the following services: Academic Advising, Admissions and the Learning Resource Center.

Certainty of Educational Goals:

Previous IPR surveys of non-returning students have pointed out the significance of student goal certainty with respect to retention. Those students who were the most certain of their educational goals were more likely to persist in their enrollment at the College. It would not be unrealistic to assume, therefore that those students who were more certain of their educational goals would also be more likely to finish more quickly than those who were less certain of their goals at time of admittance.

The respondents were asked to indicate how certain they were of their educational goal when they first entered Sinclair. The majority indicated they were very certain (51.5%), but an additional 27.7% indicated they were somewhat certain, 14.4% stated they were somewhat uncertain and the balance of 6.4% indicated they were very uncertain when then first entered the College. Overall, students self-reported an average of 3.36 years (40.3 months) to complete their degree after they became degree-seeking. Using an analysis of variance of months to completion by goal certainty, we found no statistical support for the hypotheses that goal certainty positively improved time to completion.

Future Plans:

Only a very small percentage of the respondents indicated they planned to be in military service within this next year (2.4%). However, 50.4% did indicate they planned to be enrolled in a baccalaureate institution within the year.

Employment information:

At the time of this survey:

28.9% of the respondents indicated they were employed full-time
37.4% were employed part-time
33.2% are seeking full-time employment
7.5% are seeking part-time employment
10.9% are not looking for work at this time.

Of those employed (n = 342), 38% are currently working in fields **not** associated with their degree. (It is not surprising that many of these students are not employed in their field at the time this survey was taken, as for many, the degree was yet to be finalized Also, for some students, employment within the field for which they were trained at Sinclair is contingent upon passing licensure exams, which in most cases cannot be taken until some months after graduation).

This figure is very similar to that noted in previous years. Also like previous years, graduates from Business and Engineering Technologies were most likely to say that their current job was somewhat or directly related to their program of study. Actual placement rates will be captured from this population later this year.

Mean gross annual salary for the respondents was $17,413 overall. For those working in directly or somewhat directly-related employment (n=212) mean gross annual salary is $18,630.

SINCLAIR COMMUNITY COLLEGE

As part of the application for graduation, all certificate and degree candidates should complete and return this form with the balance of the application packet directed to the Registrar's Office. Thank you.

POINT-OF-GRADUATION
EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

N = 505

Your Social Security Number:_____

1. You are applying for a degree or certificate in what major?_____

2. Rate those courses **in your major field of study** according to how well they met your needs:

	(1) Excellent	(2) Good	(3) Adequate	4) Fair	(5) Poor
Quality of Instruction	47.4%	48.4%	3.6%	0.4%	0.2%
Testing/Grading	31.5%	57.8%	9.5%	1.2%	0.0%
Faculty Attitudes	46.7%	41.2%	9.3%	2.2%	0.6%
Course Content	42.1%	48.2%	8.1%	1.4%	0.2%
Instructional Material	37.9%	48.2%	12.5%	1.2%	0.2%
Class Size	52.6%	37.5%	7.5%	1.8%	0.6%
Course Variety	39.4%	44.5%	13.1%	2.4%	0.6%
Course Availability	29.4%	34.7%	24.2%	7.7%	4.0%

3. If you were evaluating courses **outside your major** using the above ratings, would they be:
   - 8.1% Significantly worse than major
   - 88.6% About the same as major
   - 3.2% Significantly better than major

4. Using a scale of 1 = excellent to 5 = poor, rate the following college services **that you have used within the last two years**. If you did not use a particular service, leave it blank. (mean responses)

2.063	Academic Advising	2.721	Parking
2.039	Admissions	1.846	Mail-in Registration
2.191	Adult ReEntry	2.179	In-person Registration
2.349	Bookstore	2.060	Bursar/Cashier Registration
2.331	Cafeteria/Vending	2.291	Student Activities
2.000	Career Plan.& Placement	2.288	Student Counseling & Dvlpment
1.889	Disability Services	2.118	Testing Center, ILC
2.844	Financial Aid	2.339	Tutoring
1.943	Library	1.902	Grounds Maintenance

5. **When you first entered Sinclair**, how certain were you about your educational goal?
   - 51.5% Very certain
   - 27.7% Somewhat certain
   - 14.4% Somewhat uncertain
   - 6.4% Very uncertain

(OVER)

6. Once you became degree-seeking, how many years did it take you to complete your educational goal? Mean months = 40.299 Mean years = 3.36

7. Within the next year will you be:

In Military Service?	2.4%	Yes	97.6%	No
Enrolled in a baccalaureate institution?	50.4%	Yes	49.6%	No

8. What is your current employment status? (Check all that apply)

		N
28.9%	Employed full-time	146
37.4%	Employed part-time	189
33.2%	Seeking full-time employment	168
7.5%	Seeking part-time employment	38
10.9%	Not seeking employment at this time	55

9. **If you are currently employed**, please answer the following:

To what extent is this job related to your program of study at Sinclair?
- 38.0% Not related
- 23.1% Somewhat related
- 38.9% Directly related

Are you satisfied with your current job?
- 53.8% Yes
- 46.2% No

How long have you been employed in your current job?
- 28.2% Less than 1 year
- 71.8% 1 Year or more # of years (mean years) = 5.73

In an ongoing effort to improve the quality of education and preparedness of our graduates, Sinclair periodically surveys the employers of our graduates. The information obtained from these surveys assists us with course development, program review and placement counseling. To that end, please provide your current job title and the full name and address of the company by whom you are employed.

Job Title: _____

Company Name: _____

Street Address _____

City: _____ State:_____ Zip Code:_____

Supervisor's Name: _____

*Gross annual salary $17,413 (Mean) Std. Dev. = $11,949
*(This is for those who are working in their career field at this time so that we can provide new students with salary range information relative to their chosen career.)

Congratulations on your upcoming graduation! Please return this document to the Registrar's office upon completion. Thank you.